

What is claimed:

1. A method for reducing cholesterol in a mammal comprising administering an effective amount of theaflavins.
- 5 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the theaflavins are selected from the group consisting of theaflavin, a gallate ester of theaflavin, and mixtures thereof.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the theaflavins are derived from tea.
- 10 4. The method of claim 2 wherein the gallate ester of theaflavin is selected from the group consisting of theaflavin monogallate, theaflavin digallate, and mixtures thereof.
5. The method of claim 2 wherein the gallate ester of theaflavin is selected from the group consisting of theaflavin-3-gallate, theaflavin-3'-gallate, theaflavin-3,3'-digallate,
15 and mixtures thereof.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the gallate ester of theaflavin is theaflavin-3-gallate.
- 20 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the theaflavin-3-gallate is derived from tea.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein the amount of theaflavins ranges from about 1 mg to about 800 mg.
- 25 9. The method of claim 2 wherein the amount of theaflavins ranges from about 1 mg to about 800 mg.
10. A method for treating hyperlipidemia in a mammal comprising administering an effective amount of an anti-hyperlipidemia compound selected from the group consisting
30 of theaflavin, a gallate ester of theaflavin, and mixtures thereof.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the anti-hyperlipidemia compound is derived from tea.
12. The method of claim 10 wherein the gallate ester of theaflavin is selected from
5 the group consisting of theaflavin monogallate, theaflavin digallate, and mixtures thereof.
13. The method of claim 10 wherein the gallate ester of theaflavin is selected from the group consisting of theaflavin-3-gallate, theaflavin-3'-gallate, theaflavin-3,3'-
10 digallate, and mixtures thereof.
14. The method of claim 13 wherein the gallate ester of theaflavin is theaflavin-3-gallate.
- 15 15. The method of claim 14 wherein the theaflavin-3-gallate is derived from tea.
16. The method of claim 10 wherein the amount of the anti-hyperlipidemia compound ranges from about 1 mg to about 800 mg.